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AN INTEGRAL OF PRODUCTS OF LEGENDRE FUNCTIONS AND A CLEBSCH-GOR--ETC(U)

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MRC Technical Summary Report # 2250

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July 1981

(Received July 2, 1981)

Sponsored by

U. S. Army Research Office  
P. O. Box 12211  
Research Triangle Park  
North Carolina 27709

and

National Science Foundation  
Washington, DC 20550

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AN INTEGRAL OF PRODUCTS OF LEGENDRE FUNCTIONS  
AND A CLEBSCH-GORDAN SUM

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ABSTRACT

New proofs and extensions are given of a sum considered by A. M. Din involving Clebsch-Gordan coefficients with zero magnetic quantum numbers and of an integral involving the product of three Legendre functions, one of the second kind.

AMS (MOS) Subject Classifications: 33A45, 33A70, 81.33

Key Words: Legendre polynomials, Legendre function, Clebsch-Gordan coefficients

Work Unit Number 1 - Applied Analysis

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Sponsored by the United States Army under Contract No. DAAG29-80-C-0041. This work was partially supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. MCS-8101568.

AN INTEGRAL OF PRODUCTS OF LEGENDRE FUNCTIONS  
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Richard Askey\*

Din [1] showed that

$$S := \sum_{\substack{i=|c-b| \\ i \neq a}}^{c+b} \frac{2i+1}{i(i+1) - a(a+1)} (c_{i0b0}^{c0})^2 = 0 \quad (1)$$

when  $a, b$  and  $c$  are non-negative integers with  $a + b + c$  odd and  $|c-b| \leq a \leq c+b$ . The Clebsch-Gordan coefficients with zero magnetic quantum numbers are given by

$$(c_{i0b0}^{c0})^2 = \frac{2c+1}{2} \int_{-1}^1 dx P_i(x) P_b(x) P_c(x) , \quad (2)$$

This integral was evaluated by Ferrers and others in the last century. The evaluation comes from the linearization formula

$$P_n(x) P_m(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{\min(m,n)} \frac{(\frac{1}{2})_{m-k} (\frac{1}{2})_{n-k} (\frac{1}{2})_k (m+n-k)! (m+n-2k+\frac{1}{2})}{(m-k)! (n-k)! k! (\frac{1}{2})_{m-n-k} (m+n-k+\frac{1}{2})} P_{m+n-2k}(x) , \quad (3)$$

and the orthogonality of Legendre polynomials. See [2]. To show (1) Din reduced it to showing that

$$I(a,b,c) := \int_{-1}^1 dx Q_a(x) P_b(x) P_c(x) = 0 \quad (4)$$

when  $a, b, c \geq 1$  are integers,  $a + b + c$  is odd and  $|c-a| < b < c+a$ .

Here  $P_i(x)$  is the Legendre polynomial and  $Q_a(x)$  is the Legendre function of the second kind on the cut  $[-1,1]$ . He ended the paper by stating that I could evaluate (4) for general integers  $a, b, c$ . The details follow.

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Din started with

$$\int_{-1}^1 dx Q_a(x) P_b(x) = \frac{1 - \cos(b-a)\pi}{(b-a)(b+a+1)}, \quad a, b = 1, 2, \dots, a \neq b, \quad (5)$$

with a reference to [3]. A generalization of (5) is given there when  $a$  and  $b$  are complex,  $\operatorname{Re} a > 0$ ,  $\operatorname{Re} b > 0$ , and the extra term which occurs vanishes when either  $a$  or  $b$  is an integer. The argument in [3] used the Legendre differential equation. Here is a second derivation of (5). Start with an expansion of Heine [4]

$$Q_a(\cos \theta) = \frac{2 a!}{\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)_a} \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \frac{\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)_i (a+1)_i}{i! (a+\frac{3}{2})_i} \cos(a+2i+1)\theta.$$

The shifted factorial  $(c)_n$  is defined by

$$(c)_n = \Gamma(n+c)/\Gamma(c) = c(c+1)\cdots(c+n-1).$$

Since  $P_a(-x) = (-1)^a P_a(x)$  and  $Q_a(-x) = (-1)^{a+1} Q_a(x)$ ,  $a = 0, 1, \dots$ , we may assume  $a$  and  $b$  have opposite parity, for the integral in (5) vanishes when  $a$  and  $b$  have the same parity. Then

$$\begin{aligned} I(a,b,0) &= \frac{2 a!}{\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)_a} \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \frac{\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)_i (a+1)_i}{i! (a+\frac{3}{2})_i} \int_0^\pi d\theta \cos(a+2i+1)\theta \sin \theta P_b(\cos \theta) \\ &= \frac{2 a!}{\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)_a} \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \frac{\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)_i (a+1)_i (a+2i+1)(i+(a+b-1)/2)! (-\frac{1}{2})_{i+(a+1-b)/2}}{i! (a+\frac{3}{2})_i \frac{3}{2} i! (i+(a+b+1)/2)!} \end{aligned}$$

by a special case of an integral of Gegenbauer which is equivalent to [5]

$$C_n^{\mu}(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{[\frac{n}{2}]} \frac{(\mu)_{n-k} (\mu-\lambda)_k (n-2k+\lambda)}{(\lambda+1)_{n-k} k! \lambda} C_{n-2k}^{\lambda}(x),$$

where  $C_n^{\lambda}(x)$  is the ultraspherical polynomial.

The above sum can be written as a generalized hypergeometric series and then summed by a formula of Dougall [6]. A more general sum of Dougall will be stated below. A routine reduction shows that (5) holds when  $a, b = 0, 1, \dots$ , with the integral equal to zero when  $a = b$ .

To compute the evaluation of (4) use the Ferrers-Adams linearization formula (3) and (5) to obtain

$$I(a,b,c) = \sum_{k=0}^{\min(b,c)} \frac{\binom{1/2}{b-k} \binom{1/2}{c-k} \binom{1/2}{k} (b+c-k)! (b+c-2k+1/2)!}{(b-k)! (c-k)! k! (\frac{1}{2})_{b+c-k} (b+c-k+1/2)!}$$

$$= \frac{[1-\cos(b+c-2k-a)\pi]}{(b+c-a-2k)(b+c+a+1-2k)}$$

$$= \frac{[1-\cos(b+c-a)\pi] \binom{1/2}{b} \binom{1/2}{c} (b+c)!}{(b+c-a)(b+c+a+1)b! c! (\frac{1}{2})_{b+c}}$$

$${}_7F_6 \left( \begin{matrix} -b-c-1/2, -b/2-c/2+\frac{3}{4}, -b, -c, 1/2, (a-b-c)/2, (-1-a-b-c)/2 \\ -b/2-c/2-\frac{1}{4}, 1/2-c, 1/2-b, -b-c, (1-a-b-c)/2, (2+a-b-c)/2 \end{matrix} ; 1 \right)$$

Dougall's sum of the very well poised 2-balanced  ${}_7F_6$  [7],

$${}_7F_6 \left( \begin{matrix} a, 1+a/2, b, c, d, e, -n \\ a/2, 1+a-b, 1+a-c, 1+a-d, 1+a-e, 1+a+n \end{matrix} ; 1 \right)$$

$$= \frac{(1+a)_n (1+a-b-c)_n (1+a-b-d)_n (1+a-c-d)_n}{(1+a-b)_n (1+a-c)_n (1+a-d)_n (1+a-c-d)_n}$$
(8)

when  $1+2a = b+c+d+e-n$ , can be used and the result is

$$\int_{-1}^1 dx Q_a(x) P_b(x) P_c(x)$$

$$= \frac{[1-\cos(b+c-a)\pi] (-(b+c+a)/a) {}_c((b-c-a+1)/2) {}_c}{(b+c-a)(b+c+a+1) (-(b+c+a-1)/2) {}_c((b-c-a)/2) {}_c}$$
(9)

when  $0 \leq b \leq c$ ,  $a+b+c$  odd, and zero when  $a+b+c$  is even. Since this integral vanishes when  $b+c+a$  is even, we may write  $a = b+c+1+2k$ . The integral is then

$$\int_{-1}^1 dx Q_{b+c+1+2k}(x) P_b(x) P_c(x)$$

$$= - \frac{\Gamma(k+b+c+\frac{3}{2})\Gamma(k+b+1)\Gamma(k+c+1)\Gamma(k+\frac{1}{2})}{2\Gamma(k+b+c+2)\Gamma(k+b+\frac{3}{2})\Gamma(k+c+\frac{3}{2})\Gamma(k+1)} . \quad (10)$$

This integral vanishes when  $k = -1, -2, \dots, -\min(b, c)$  as was shown by Din.

Since (5) holds when  $a$  is not an integer, and the rest of the above argument only used the integrality of  $b$  and  $c$ , formula (8) continues to hold when  $\operatorname{Re} a \geq 0$ . In this case it is better to write it as

$$\int_{-1}^1 dx Q_a(x) P_b(x) P_c(x) = \frac{[1-\cos(b+c-a)\pi] \cdot \Gamma(\frac{c-b-a}{2})\Gamma(\frac{b-c-a}{2})}{(b+c-a)(b+c+a+1)\Gamma(\frac{c-b-a+1}{2})\Gamma(\frac{b-c-a+1}{2})}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma(\frac{b+c-a+1}{2})\Gamma(\frac{-b-c-a+1}{2})}{\Gamma(\frac{b+c-a}{2})\Gamma(\frac{-b-c-a}{2})}, \quad \operatorname{Re} a \geq 0, b, c = 0, 1, \dots, \quad (11)$$

with an appropriate limit taken when one of the gamma functions has a pole.

The sum in (1) can be evaluated in exactly the same way, only the details are easier. One only needs to use (2) to replace the Clebsch-Gordan coefficients by a known integral, rewrite the series as a generalized hypergeometric series and use Dougall's sum (8). Fortunately Din was unaware of Dougall's sum, for the integral in (11) seems to be a fundamental result, and it does not seem to have been evaluated before. I was surprised by this, since Hobson [8] wrote that F. E. Neumann had evaluated this integral. However it is not given in the book of Neumann that Hobson mentions nor in the other book of Neumann that I have looked at.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was partly supported by NSF Grant No. MCS-8101568. I would like to thank A. M. Din for bringing these problems to my attention.

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14) MRC-71SK-7

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER 2250	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER <i>Mathematics Research Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706</i>	
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) An Integral of Products of Legendre Functions and a Clebsch-Gordan Sum		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Summary Report, no specific reporting period	
6. AUTHOR(s) Richard Askey		7. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER <i>VAST</i> DAAG29-80-C-0041 MCS-8101568	
8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Mathematics Research Center, University of Wisconsin 610 Walnut Street Madison, Wisconsin 53706		9. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS Work Unit Number 1 - Applied Analysis	
10. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS (see Item 18 below)		11. REPORT DATE 11 July 1981	
12. NUMBER OF PAGES 5		13. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED	
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office) <i>128</i>		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE	
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.			
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)			
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES U. S. Army Research Office P. O. Box 12211 Research Triangle Park North Carolina 27709      and      National Science Foundation Washington, DC 20550			
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Legendre polynomials, Legendre function, Clebsch-Gordan coefficients			
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) New proofs and extensions are given of a sum considered by A. M. Din involving Clebsch-Gordan coefficients with zero magnetic quantum numbers and of an integral involving the product of three Legendre functions, one of the second kind.			